

[Mr George R.—age 73, unmarried]

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Ethnic Studios

Interviews

Francis Donovan,

Thomaston, Conn.

Mr.George R — age 73, unmarried

“Sure, got plenty of time to talk. Got more time than money. It's gettin' so, I don't know what [?] to do with an my time any more. Can't see to read. Got cataracts on both eyes. I can just about see to walk. People tell me I'm goin' to git smacked by a car crossin' the [?] street one of these days. Well, I tell 'em, 'twon't be much loss. Not much loss. You get as old as I be, and no family nor close relations, and you ain't got much to look forward to but passin' on to the next world.

“Sure, I believe in it. Don't seem likely this here world is the best there is. Gits worse every year When I was your age, 'twasn't a bad place to live Wa'n't no wars goin' on, everybody was workin' that wanted to work, folks were satisfied to live quiet and peaceful. Wa'n't no [?] radios blastin' you out of the house, wa'n't no cars killin' thirty thousand people every year. That's what changed everything — your automobile. Your automobile is what ruined this country, more ways than one. Every little squirt that makes as much as fifteen dollars a week has to have an car. And that's where most the fifteen dollars goes — into the car. Who gits all the money? Why, the big gas companies. Big gas companies git all the money. Goes right out of circulation.

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"Yes, I worked in the shop here 47 years. Retired me two years ago. They let a bunch of us old timers go all 'bout the same time. Give us a little pension, but that's goin' to stop pretty soon now. And when it [?] does I don't know how I'm goin' to git along. I could git me in old age pension, if I wanted to sign my life insurance away. Woman from the state come here some time ago I says, 'Nothin' doin'", I says. 'Think I'm [?] goin' to sign away my chance for a decent burial?' I says 'That's all I got to look forward to.' She says, 'Well, I wouldn't look at it that 2 way.' I says, 'Well, I would.'

"I don't know if I can come in on this Social Security or not. Seems to me I can, but I'll have to find out about it. I know they was takin' money out of my pay, down to the shop. Seems to me I ought to git somethin'.

"No, I don't belong to no organizations. Never was a joiner. My father was a great one for lodges Why he had 'bout six different uniforms, all with fancy hats and swords and everything. Took up a whole closet, his lodge [?] did My mother used to say if he saved the money he spent on those lodges we could have owned our own house. "Don't have nothin' to do with 'em," she says to me. Well, I never did, but I never seemed to be [?] able to save any money either. Guess it just wa'n't in our family to save money I always made pretty good pay, but it just seemed to melt away. My sister kept house for me, up until she passed away six years ago She wa'n't extravagant, but she wa'n't the savin' kind either. Darned if I know where the money went. Only recreation we ever had was the movies, twice a week. That only come to a dollar

"I don't know's you have to know what my [?] politics [?], do you? What do you think they be? Yes, that's right — Republican. Republican and proud of it That's what my father used to say, Republican and proud of It. There used to be an old German, Hans Winkler, lived up here on the Northfield road. He used to tease my father every election day. 'Vot's your politiker, Chorge?' he'd say. 'Democrat, I hear.' 'Republican, damn you, and proud of it,' my father'd say. I never see any reason to change. I never see the Democrats get in yet,

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but what they didn't make a mess of everything. Now that's my opinion, you asked for it and I gave it to you.

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"Don't ask me nothin' about marriage. I been a bachelor all my life, you wouldn't expect me to be an expert on marriage, would yo? I never got married because I never wanted to, that's all. Besides I had my sister to look out for

"Unions I do not believe in. Nossir' I hear they got one down to the shop now. Well, they got a lot of dummies down there that'll join it and expect to get a raise in pay right off the bat, and then after a year or two when they ain't gittin' any more'n they was before, they'll drop out Meantime the company's got every one or them down for troublemakers, don't you forgit it. Every time a union gits in, the company gits its back up, and in the end the ones that join ain't no better off than they was before. Worse off. Look at the money they paid out in dues."